

Saint Louis University

St. Louis, MO

**Chemistry and Business
Administration**

Bachelor of Arts and Certificate, May
2005

**NASA Academy Research Project:
Biogeochemistry of Microbial
Ecosystems**



Principal Investigator: Dr. Tori Hoehler

Education and Experience:

This girl is California-born and proud of it! I lived in Palo Alto for the first four years of my life and couldn't be more excited to return "home" for the summer. St. Louis is my true home, where I am currently a rising senior at Saint Louis University working towards my bachelor's degree in chemistry and a certificate in business administration. My interests are broad and include just about every scientific field under the sun. Studying chemistry and business has created a surprisingly complementary mix, allowing me to develop a solid knowledge of science while deepening my understanding of industry endeavors in relation to science and the environment.

As every space enthusiast will tell you, there is something that draws their eyes to the night sky, and once you're hooked, that inexplicable pull stays with you for life. It's definitely in me. That day six years ago when I was asked to take part in the Mars mission field tests marked a turning point in my life, and I haven't looked back since. My six years of involvement with the Mars Exploration Rovers mission have made me an official NASA enthusiast. I own a T-shirt that says, "As a matter of fact, I AM a rocket scientist," and couldn't be prouder.

I participated in the 1999 FIDO Prototype rover tests, spending time at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and at the California Mojave Desert test site, and I had the incredible opportunity to implement command sequences to remotely drive the rover from back home in St. Louis with my team. I spent a week interning at JPL during the 2002 summer field tests, manipulating camera images and spectroscopy data and shadowing mission scientists and engineers. Since then, I have worked in the Remote Sensing

Laboratory at Washington University in St. Louis, aiding in data recovery of the field tests and mission, and in the creation of an online “Notebook” to archive mission data for the public.

Last summer, I visited Kennedy Space Center and got extremely close – but not quite close enough – to witnessing the launch of the second Mars rover, Opportunity, from the beach at Cape Canaveral. Despite the disappointment, all the rocket scientists, engineers, and I still managed to have a fabulous evening running around in the sand with sparklers and watching local fireworks. Who says rocket science isn’t fun?

Extra-curricular Activities:

Outside of class and the lab, I definitely like to keep busy. I am a passionate environmentalist at heart. I adore traveling, and I pack up and head off to a new place whenever I get the chance. I always enjoy seeing new cities, but there is a constant pull inside me towards the mountains, the coast, the desert – pretty much any outdoor environment I can get to. My time spent hiking, biking, white-water rafting, trail running, horseback riding, and camping have only furthered the love of the outdoors that has been a part of me since my childhood. The highlights of my travels thus far are rafting the Rio Grande and climbing the 500-foot Kelso Dunes in the Mojave and Great Sand Dunes in Colorado. Included in my many goals for the future are learning to sail, fish, rock climb, surf, snow ski, water ski, skydive, snorkel, and scuba dive. I have recently developed a fascination with airplanes and flying, and I hope some day to get my pilot’s license.

Also included in my quite long “life-to-do-list” is to learn yoga and learn to play the piano and guitar. I love to paint and draw, and I enjoy cooking and baking, especially anything sweet and chocolate. I adore working with children, and being a camp counselor for five summers has been a truly rewarding and enlightening experience. My other hobbies include playing tennis, running, biking, weight lifting, dancing (especially my new interest in country line dancing), singing, reading, writing, copy editing for my University’s newspaper, crocheting, keeping up with environmental and scientific research, and enjoying time with family and friends. My two true loves are the sky and the ocean, and I am constantly star-gazing and continually adding to my extensive sand and seashell collection from my travels to the coast.

What’s next for this NASA/science/life enthusiast? Good question. Maybe graduate school in atmospheric and oceanic science. Maybe law school studying environmental law. Maybe taking a year or two off to do research. Who knows? For now, the answer is written in the stars, which is just the way I like it.

